

CALIFORNIA COASTAL COMMISSION

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April 18, 2013

Mary Nichols, Chair
California Air Resources Board
1001 I Street,
P.O. Box 2851
Sacramento, CA 95812

RE: Cap-and-Trade Auction Funds/Ship Speed Reduction Program

Dear Chair Nichols and CARB members:

I write on behalf of the California Coastal Commission to express support for the Santa Barbara Air Quality Management District proposal to implement a Vessel Speed Reduction Incentive Program along the California coast, using funds generated from Cap-and-Trade auction credits. Existing programs already in place in the ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles have proven effective in reducing both greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) as well as the potential for whale strikes.

Lowering vessel speed in shipping channels reduces particulate matter and GHGs in from diesel ship engines in coastal areas in much the same way that lowering freeway speed limits reduces emissions from vehicles. Expanding this successful model beyond the Ports of Long Beach and Los Angeles would significantly improve coastal air and water quality and benefit public health by reducing air toxics and particulate matter. These substances ultimately find their way into the marine environment, contributing to ocean acidification as well.

Vessel speed reduction can also benefit whales and other marine wildlife by reducing the likelihood and severity of collisions, which is especially important in migratory corridors and foraging grounds, such as the Santa Barbara Channel. For endangered species, such as the Blue Whale, preventing even a single lethal ship strike could be a significant benefit to the population.

Expanding the successful vessel speed reduction programs in Los Angeles and Long Beach would allow the state to enhance air quality, water quality, public health and marine wildlife safety with the implementation of a single, far-reaching policy. Once again, California has the opportunity to lead by example. The monitoring and implementation proposed by the Santa Barbara Air Quality Management District could provide science, data and management models useful to other states that share California's objectives to reduce GHGs and improve environmental health. Thank you for your careful consideration of this proposal.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Charles F. Lester".

CHARLES F. LESTER
Executive Director